

update

Governor's Advisory Council on Aging



SPRING 2003

May 2003 is Older Americans Month

Arizona will be joining the nation in celebrating and honoring older adults during the month of May. This year's Older Americans Month theme is, "*What We Do Makes A Difference*." It is a month to celebrate the many contributions older adults have made and continue to make to our society. It is also a time to highlight agencies and individuals who promote and support programs and services that make a strong, positive impact on older adults' lives.

May is also the month for three other health awareness campaigns. *Mental Health Matters Every Day* is the theme of the National Mental Health Institute campaign to improve public understanding about mental health. The Older Women's League (OWL),

WHAT WE DO *makes a difference*

the National Mental Health Institute and the Administration on Aging will launch Older Americans Mental Health Week, May 25-31, 2003 to highlight the role of mental health in successful aging.

Wednesday, May 28 is National Senior Health & Fitness Day. The goals for this event are to make exercise fun; increase awareness of the benefits of a regular exercise program; and encourage all older adults to take advantage of the health and fitness programs offered in their communities. Articles on these campaigns are found in this issue.

Advisory Session to Focus on Older Women Workers

On May 22, 2003, the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging will co-sponsor a U.S. Department of Labor Women's Bureau Advisory Session, to address projected labor shortages and diversity issues. The Advisory Session is to help employers tap into an underutilized pool of potential employees—older women. Participants will develop strategies, solutions

and recommendations to aid employers and resource agencies to resolve issues relative to recruiting and retaining older women workers.

The Advisory Session is a one-time event scheduled from 8:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. at the Arizona State University Downtown Campus, 5th Street and Monroe. By attending, businesses and placement agencies will be in a better position to keep and recruit valuable older women workers. If you are a business owner or employment/referral agency and would like to attend, call the Council office at 602-542-4710.

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Where's the Color?

In light of the recent state budget crisis, the Governor's Council is trimming costs. Dropping the color ink for the newsletter saves a small amount, but every penny counts!

Focusing on Mental Health in May



May is designated Mental Health Month, and **May 25-31 is Older Americans Mental Health Week**. This year's theme, *Mental Health Matters Every Day*, will be highlighted in a publicity campaign being conducted in senior centers across Arizona. The Mental Health Association of Arizona, with help from the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging, Area Agencies on Aging,

the Arizona Senior Center Association, and the Older Women's League (OWL), will supply information, give presentations, and schedule depression screenings as requested. The goal of the campaign is to increase awareness, reduce stigma, and encourage treatment for mental illness.

Mistaken assumptions about mental health and aging have serious implications for older adults, especially women. "Too many Americans mistakenly believe mental illness is a normal part of aging," said Laurie Young, Ph.D., executive director of OWL. "Older women disproportionately suffer the consequences of undiagnosed and untreated mental illness."

ARIZONA INFORMATION and WEBSITES

The Mental Health Association of Arizona's Information and Referral helps people from anywhere in the state. Call the toll free number,

1-800-MHA-9277
(1-800-642-9277)

For information on mental health providers, informational articles and resources, go to the Arizona Dept. of Health Services, Behavioral Health Services website,

www.hs.state.az.us/bhs

Also, the Behavioral Health and Aging Coalition maintains a behavioral health resource directory that can be accessed on the ADHS website,

www.hs.state.az.us/bhs

Mental Health Matters — EVERY DAY!

The National Mental Health Association suggests these tips for a healthy self

- SUN** Relax and re-energize!
- MON** Surround yourself with supportive people!
- TUE** Help others!
- WED** Take care of your body!
- THUR** Make a plan for the week!
- FRI** Broaden your horizons!
- SAT** Value yourself!

Although 4.4 percent of older adults have a diagnosed mood disorder such as depression, up to 20 percent have significant symptoms of depression. About 11 percent of adults over age 55 have an anxiety disorder (U.S. Surgeon General, 1999). Twenty percent of older Americans have a diagnosable mental illness, yet, research shows that fewer than one in four are fortunate enough to get any mental health attention, let alone appropriate care.

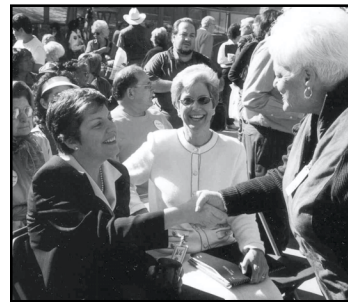
Currently, when an older person goes to a doctor for treatment of a physical illness, Medicare pays 80% of the bill, and the patient is responsible for 20%. However, when that same person seeks help for a mental illness, Medicare pays only 50% of the bill, leaving 50% for the patient to pay. Because many seniors live on a fixed budget, and the Medicare program itself does not prioritize mental health diagnosis and treatment, many simply go without needed mental health care. For more information on federal legislation to address this issue, contact OWL at 202-783-6686, toll free at 800-825-3695, fax them at 202-628-0458, or visit the Older Womens League website, owlinfo@owl-national.org.

Senior Action Day - A Great Day for Advocacy

On March 6, 2003, Governor Janet Napolitano greeted a crowd of more than 1,000 at Senior Action Day and talked about the significance of the budget on the quality of life in Arizona. She pledged to not balance the state budget on the backs of children, families and seniors. She talked about her prescription drug initiative and thanked the audience for their support. Leonard Kirschner, M.D., AARP Executive Council, reported on the political landscape and encouraged the crowd to be strong advocates. Why? Because activism makes for vigorous debate and better laws.

The Legislature was in the throes of resolving a \$300 million budget shortfall, yet more than 60 legislators

met with their constituents during lunch. Event participants got to visit the Capitol, collect information



Governor Janet Napolitano (left) greets a participant while talking with Noreen Sharp at Senior Action Day.

from 60 services and program exhibitors, and interact with people involved in aging issues. The day also was filled with good food, free ice cream, and entertainment. Senior Action Day again provided seniors with an opportunity to make a difference.

Older Americans Month MAY 2003 Calendar of Events

1 The first day of enrollment into the **State of Arizona Prescription Drug Discount Program**. The cost of the program card is \$9.95, discounts range between 15% and 55%. Call the RxAmerica Help Desk at 1-800-700-8014.

2 **Governor's Advisory Council on Aging** will be reviewing the **2004-2006 State Plan on Aging**, 9:30 a.m. to noon, Room 110, 1717 W. Washington St., Phoenix.

2 Pima Council on Aging will host a **Centenarian Celebration** for persons who are 99 years of age and older. 11:00 a.m., Tucson Medical Center. For more information, call (520) 790-7262.

2 **Grandparents Raising Grandchildren Fourth Annual Conference** will be held in Tucson. Registration \$15, includes lunch. Childcare is free. For more information, call (520) 323-4476.

13 Healthy Women for a Lifetime presents **Former Texas Governor Ann Richards** speaking on **"Taking Charge of Your Health,"** 7 p.m., Phoenix Civic Plaza. \$20 per person. For more information, 480-944-4407, ext. 29.

18-21 Arizona Town Hall on **"Healthy Care Choices: Healthy Aging - Late Life Decisions."** By invitation only.

22 **Advisory Session**, U.S. Department of Labor/Family Care, 8:30 a.m. to 11:45 a.m., Arizona State University Downtown, Phoenix. Call the Council at (602) 542-4710.

28 **Senior Fitness Day in Flagstaff**. Free to the public. Wellness activities and lectures, health

and exhibit fair. Optional luncheon \$15, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Radisson Woodlands Hotel. For more information, call (928) 774-1680.

28 **Senior Fitness Day in Peoria**. Free to public. Fun walk at 7:30 a.m., fitness and wellness activities, refreshments, free giveaways at the Peoria Community Center, 8335 W. Jefferson St., Peoria. For more information, call (623) 773-7921.



Senior Health & Fitness Day May 28

Wednesday, May 28, 2003 is the 10th anniversary of National Senior Health & Fitness Day. The common goal for this day is to help keep older Americans healthy and fit. National Senior Health & Fitness Day is the nation's largest annual health promotion event for older adults.

The event is organized through a public-private partnership by the Mature Market Resource Center, a national information clearinghouse for the older adult market. For Arizona events, see the *Older Americans Month May 2003 Calendar* on page 3.

Visit Our New Web Page

The Governor's Advisory Council on Aging's website contains the latest information on the Council, 2003 Meeting Schedules, program descriptions, publications and an expanded resource links page. Visitors can enlarge the font size by going to the View menu, selecting Type Size and then select Large or Larger.

www.de.state.az.us/gaca

Please visit the site and send us your comments. Contact Elvera Anselmo at 602-542-4710 or eanselmo@mail.de.state.az.us.



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